

# Meet Ted Flynn

Veteran of town boards is the newest selectman

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Ted Flynn's introduction to Duxbury was a rather dramatic one. He moved into town just after the Blizzard of '78.



The snow was piled so high in front of his new home that he had to carve out a path from the front

door using an axe, just so he could move in a piano for his family.

A little storm wasn't enough to scare this Bronx native and Coast Guard veteran (he retired as a captain after four years of active duty and 26 as a reservist) however,



Ted Flynn

and he soon grew to love his adopted hometown. Now he's looking to give back as Duxbury's newest member of the Board of Selectmen.

"I have no specific agenda," Flynn said. "My approach has always been that I love the town, I love what it stands for, I really enjoyed raising my children here."

Flynn, who was elected Saturday in an uncontested

continued on page 16

## Flynn is newest selectman

continued from page one

race for a three-year seat on the board, is a man who likes to keep busy. The 68-year-old still works full time as the President of the Society of Certified Public Accountants, and he also serves as the vice chairman of the board for the New England Center for Homeless Veterans. He's served on a number of town boards in the past, including the Board of Library Trustees (he gave up that seat to run for selectman) and he's active with the My Brother's Keeper charity at Holy Family Church.

"I think I have a good understanding of municipal government," he said. "I've been active in the town since we moved here."

It's not just work and service. Flynn is also a golfer, tennis player and likes to putter around in his garden.

Despite all his activities, Flynn said he's more than ready to take on the challenge

### THE FLYNN FILE

**Name:** Ted Flynn

**Age:** 68

**Lives on:** Stockade Path

**Family:** Wife Donna, three adult children, Ted, Amy and Anne. Donna has two sons, Kevin and Brendan.

**Prior Gov't Experience:** Finance Committee, School Committee, Board of Library Trustees

**Civic Experience:** Board of Directors, New England Center for Homeless Veterans and Mass. Adoption Resource Exchange; My Brother's Keeper.

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— Flynn on Duxbury's capital needs

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pp. 1 and 16

of being a selectman.

"I'm a very effective time manager," he said. "I like to keep busy."

It was in his capacity as a library trustee, walking the building with former Director Elaine Winquist, that Flynn started to notice the disrepair present in town facilities.

While examining a leak in the building's roof, he told Winquist: "You're not a librarian anymore, you're a facilities manager."

Flynn said he believes the biggest challenge facing Duxbury is managing its capital expenses.

"We collectively have got to stop winding up in the position we're in right now," he said, referring to the fact that Duxbury voters just approved a new police station, a major fire station renovation and is on the way to (essentially) two new schools.

"We should have done the police station 15 years ago," he said. "We've got to somehow systemize our capital expenditures."

A good first step, Flynn believes, is to hire a facilities manager to oversee the 50 major buildings in Duxbury's inventory. Beyond that, he believes the key is getting Duxbury taxpayers on board with a long-range capital plan.

"We're not building a

school with a 50 year shelf life. It's going to need a roof in 20-25 years. Plan that," he said. "We've got to get the town to buy into it, whatever we do."

Part of this challenge is the fact that Duxbury relies so heavily on real estate taxes,

Flynn said. He said he often hears complaints about surrounding towns like Scituate having lower taxes.

"All you have to do is drive up 3A and you realize why it is, they have business in the town," he said. "We are very dependent on real estate taxes."

However, he noted that a 1999 comprehensive plan done by Duxbury identified the community's number one priority as keeping the rural and historical nature of the town intact — something he says he agrees with.

"I don't think the opportunity is there [to broaden the tax base.] Duxbury is pretty well built out," he said. "I myself would like to keep the rural flavor of the town."

Flynn said that Town Manager Richard MacDonald has done a good job so far with the operations side of the budget.

"I think the town manager has done a great job managing our finances," he said. "That's the kind of leadership we need, but we need to get our arms around the capital expenditures."

He will have an opportunity to deal with MacDonald's contract when it runs out in June.

"I think he's done an excellent job. I think he's added a lot of professionalism," he

said. "I hope he wants to stick around."

Flynn should know — he was on the 1988 study that saw Duxbury move from an executive secretary to a town manager system.

"It's a business, we need management, not three volunteers," he said.

However, his government study experience has also given him a perspective on some of the other clashes that have happened recently between boards such as the selectmen and the Planning Board. In 1988, the government study committee knew they had to make some compromises in other areas to get voters to buy into the town manager idea. So they compromised on others, letting boards such as the Planning Board and Board of Library Trustees hire their respective department head. Flynn said he didn't like the idea of making certain boards appointed rather than elected.

"I don't see why we would want to change that mix," he said.

However, he would be open to moving some of the department heads more directly under the town manager's authority.

Regardless of how government is organized, Flynn said everyone needs to work together.

"We're all ultimately working for the good of the town," he said. "We can have differences but I don't think they need to turn into gunfights."

He pointed to cooperation that is already starting between the schools and the town over the proposed new school project.

Flynn hopes his experience and perspective can help Duxbury in the years ahead, especially when it comes to finances.

"We're going to have to do more with less and to try to deliver the same service," he said. "I think I've got a good understanding of that."

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